



Bend Zen Monday Night Volunteer Roles

Summary of the Roles Outlined Below

1. The Opener of the Center (Arrive around 6:20pm)
2. Sounding the Hahn (The call to meditation, ready at 6:55 for 6:58pm start)
3. Reading (approximately 7:02pm)
4. Chant Leader (7:03pm)
5. Meditation Leader/Timekeeper (rings the bell, instructs walking, ends on time.)
6. Dharma Talk/Discussion lead (8:05 to 8:30pm)
7. Close the Center (Everyone helps, doors close at 8:45pm)

1. Opening the Zendo & Set-Up

Arrive around 6:20 to start set up, welcome new folks, and help close up/put away things after the dharma talk. Ask for the key card on the Monday before you open. Enter through the front door & follow signs to Brooks Hall. Open the external door of Brooks Hall by inserting the allen wrench (found on a hook beside the door) into a small hole on the door handle, then turn slightly. Someone will usually join you at 6:30pm to help set up. Pull the tall racks out of the left cupboard.

- Chairs/mats: Pull forward the wooden chairs until even with the left wall and add folding chairs to this row. Set up two more rows of chairs and mats. The row by the external door should be just inside the timekeeper's chair, so that person can stand and walk straight forward into the walking meditation. Leave enough space at the back for people to walk around the mats/chairs. Have enough spots for 25 people plus a few chairs on the wall by the external door for latecomers.



- Put a chant booklet on every chair or mat in the three rows.
- Wooden folding table with hand sanitizer and masks next to the external door.
- Three a-frame Bend Zen signs: put outside, leading to the Brooks Hall entrance.
- Set up the altar with the bell and chair for the timekeeper. *The Chant leader sits on the opposite side of the altar.*



- Side table on west wall: Hahn, striker, and digital timer. Donation tin. Bend Zen whiteboard, email signup sheet, and volunteer signup sheets. Two sets of meditation information sheets.



2. **Sounding the Hahn** (*The call to meditation & lighting the altar candle*). (*Hahn video on website)

- Choose a seat and reserve it for yourself. Check the altar to be sure it has the candle and lighter on it. Check the Hahn, striker, and timer are in place.
If anything is missing, find it or ask for help finding it.
- Starting at 6:57 pm, strike the Hahn intermittently for 2 minutes 20 seconds. Finish with a bow toward the Hahn.
- Turn to face the altar, with your hands in prayer position and center of your chest, walk to the altar. Bow toward the altar.
- Light the oil candle with the lighter. Stand up straight. Bow toward altar again.
- Return to your seat and bow to it. Turn away from your seat. Bow.
(Meditation Leader or Tom will ask everyone to return your bow.)
- Sit down in your seat

3. **Announcements (entire group) and Reading:**

The meditation leader will give announcements and ask if there are any additional announcements from the group.

Reader: Bring a short reading (one paragraph or less) and be ready to read it after the announcements.

4. **Chant Leader:**

Opening Chant

- Start at approximately 7:03 PM, after the person lighting the candle returns to their seat and any announcements.
- Direct people to the page the chant is on and give its name.
- Lead the opening chant, starting with three OMs.
- *The **Timekeeper** will strike the bell three times.*

Closing Chant

- *At the end of the second sit, the bell will ring once and the **timekeeper** will chant, “Four Great Bodhisattva Vows” to indicate it is about to start.*
- Lead the recitation of the Four Great Bodhisattva Vows, found on page 7 of the chant booklet. Repeat three times.

5. **Meditation Leader/Timekeeper:** (the bell and leading folks with walking...)

Supplies: Bell, ringer, wooden clapper. A timer will be provided, or use the clock. The main job is to start and on time, promptly.

- **After the person sounding the Hahn is seated**, give any announcements and ask if the group has any additional announcements.

First 25-minute sit:

- After the opening chant, ring the bell three times slowly.
- End the sit #1 either when 25 minutes is up or at 7:25 pm, whichever is first.
- At the end of the period, ring the bell twice slowly, allowing sitters to come gently out of meditation; all perform a sitting bow.
- Take the clapper in hand and stand up, saying, “Please stand.”
- Strike the clapper once, and say “bow”; all bow.

Five-minute walking meditation:

- Strike the clapper again, and say, “Walking meditation. Walk at a normal walking pace. People in the two inner rows, turn to face the back of the zendo. People in the outer row of chairs only, please face the front of the zendo.”
- After 4 ½ minutes, strike the clapper and say “bow”. Then say, “Continue walking until you return to your seat”.
- When everyone has returned to their seat, strike the clapper and say, “bow”. Then say “zazen” or “sitting meditation” and sit down.

Second 25-minute sit:

- Ring the bell three times slowly to begin the second sit.
- Track when 25 minutes is up or when 7:55 pm, whichever comes first.
- At the end of the period, ring the bell once and immediately touch it with the ringer to silence it, chanting, “Four Great Bodhisattva Vows”.
- *The chant leader will lead the recitation of the vows, repeated three times.*

Bell accompaniment to the Four Great Bodhisattva Vows:

- *Bell is silent for the first two repetitions.*
- At the start of the third repetition, ring the bell once just before the first line, “Beings are numberless...”
- *Do not ring before the second line, “Delusions are inexhaustible...”*
- Ring once before the third line, “Dharma gates are boundless...”
- Ring once before the final line, “The Buddha way is unsurpassable...”
- Ring once after the final line.
- Say, “One seated bow (*all bow*). Now we’ll have a five-minute break before the Dharma discussion.”

Ending the evening/after Dharma discussion:

- Bring the bell to be near your chair during the Dharma discussion. At 8:30pm, (end of the Dharma talk), ring the bell once. Say, “One seated bow.”
- Say, “Thank you all for coming tonight. If you have time to help put things away, we’d appreciate your assistance.”

6. Dharma Talk and Discussion (8:05 to 8:30pm):

Come prepared to hold a 25-minute talk/discussion on a topic of your choice. Leave a few minutes at the end for discussion, where you pose questions to the group. A wireless microphone and speaker system are available. (Switch on at the wall for audio, on channel 3. Turn off when done and put back on the podium.)
Finish by 8:30pm, no later.

7. Close & Put Things Away

Hopefully, everyone present will help, but someone has to be in charge of closing the center. Most often will be the opener.
Put everything back onto the two carts and roll it into the left closet.
Close doors at 8:45pm

*You can view the Hahn video at: <https://www.bendzen.net/volunteerresources>